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Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report by the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 43/178 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with the supervision of the development of the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to report to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in implementing the resolution. Pursuant to the resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a note on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/44/637) to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. Annexed to the note was a report containing summaries of 26 project proposals, which had been identified by experts retained by the Centre, for inclusion in the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

2. Following its consideration of the note by the Secretary-General, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/235 of 22 December 1989 on assistance to the Palestinian people, in which it, inter alia, took note of the report annexed to the note by the Secretary-General; requested the international community, the organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) (para. 3); reiterated its call for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the projects mentioned in Assembly resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984 (para. 7); called for the treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry (para. 4) and also called for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports on the basis of Palestinian certificates of origin (para. 5). The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) undertook to obtain information on the implementation of the resolution from the various concerned sources. Accordingly, with regard to paragraph 3, the Executive Director wrote to the relevant agencies and organizations of the United Nations system requesting pertinent information about their assistance to the Palestinian people. With regard to operative paragraph 7, he wrote to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) forwarding the project proposals contained in the report annexed to the note by the Secretary-General (A/44/637) for consideration by the Governing Council of UNDP with a view to their inclusion in the UNDP Programme of Assistance for the Palestinian People. The Administrator was also requested to bring to the attention of the Governing Council, for appropriate action, the projects mentioned in Assembly resolution 39/223. The Executive Director of the Centre also wrote to the Director-General of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), bringing to his attention, for appropriate action, paragraphs 4 and 5 of General Assembly resolution 44/235.

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4. Given below are the summaries of the replies received by the Executive Director of the Centre in response to the above-mentioned letters.

5. Any additional information received at a later stage will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

II. REPLIES FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. United Nations

1. Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

The activities of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of relevance to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/235 on assistance to the Palestinian people are contained in the report that was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fourth session (Vienna, 26 February-9 March 1990) entitled "The situation of Palestinian women in the occupied territories". 1/ In resolution 1990/11 entitled "Situation of Palestinian Women", which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council after its consideration of the above-mentioned report, the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fifth session on the implementation of the recommendations and conclusions contained in the above-mentioned report.

2. Department of Conference Services

In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 44/235, a note by the Secretary General on assistance to the Palestinian people has been processed by the Department of Conference Services and issued for consideration by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1990. 2/

3. Department of Technical Co-operation for Development

1. In addition to the general Department of Technical Co-operation for Development contribution to the Palestinian people through its extensive programme of technical assistance in all Department of Technical Co-operation for Development subject areas to all of the countries in the Middle East region, there are two projects that are particularly related to the health, welfare and development of the Palestinian population in the region.

2. Project RMI/88/P60, in the field of multi-sectoral statistics, provided funds for a 1990 workshop on project development in the occupied territories.

3. RMI/87/P05, entitled "Pan-Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD)" is a $2.57 million project executed by the League of Arab States in co-operation with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the United Nations Statistical Office, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Governments of 14 countries in the Arab region to enable the ministries of health, social affairs and national child welfare councils develop reliable information for formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating maternal and child care and health and development policies and programmes.

4. The project is also designed to improve the information base for socio-economic planning in the region and will serve to upgrade present national capabilities to undertake future child health and development studies, and to process, analyse and disseminate information on various aspects of maternal and child health in response to government needs and priorities.

5. A first phase is well under way in the countries of the Sudan, Egypt, Mauritania, the Yemen Arab Republic (which now includes the formerly separate, participating Government of Democratic Yemen) and Somalia. A second phase is planned for the other eight Arab countries of Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Djibouti, Lebanon, Tunisia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Syria.

4. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

The Centre is presently in the process of preparing a report on a national housing development strategy for the Palestinian people, pursuant to resolution 12/11 of the Commission on Human Settlements, entitled "Housing conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories". In paragraph 10 of that resolution, the Executive Director was requested "to devise a national housing development strategy to the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 in co-operation with the Palestinian State and to submit this report to the Commission at its thirteenth session".

5. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

1. In accordance with the provisions of resolution 146 (VI) and 169 (VII) of the sixth and seventh sessions, respectively, of UNCTAD and the work programmes for UNCTAD for the two bienniums 1988-1989 and 1990-1991, the work of the Special Economic Unit within the UNCTAD secretariat during the period under review (July 1989-June 1990) was concentrated on four main areas of activity, namely, (a) monitoring and analysing policies and practices of Israeli occupation authorities that hamper economic development in the occupied Palestinian territory; (b) investigating the impact of such policies and practices on key economic sectors; (c) developing the data base of the Unit for the dissemination of information on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory; and (d) contributing to the relevant activities of the organizations of the United Nations system on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory pursuant to General Assembly resolutions. In carrying out its work in these areas, the UNCTAD secretariat maintained close consultations with the representatives of Palestine and other concerned authorities.

2. The 1990 report of the UNCTAD secretariat on recent economic developments in the occupied Palestinian territory 3/ provides an update of aggregate and sectoral developments in the Palestinian economy in the 1988-1990 period, including the impact of the Palestinian uprising and related Israeli policy measures.

3. Substantive work continued on the intersectoral study, provisionally entitled, "The West Bank and Gaza Strip: Prospects for sustained economic and social development". Following a comprehensive and in-depth examination of the state of Palestinian economy, the study will attempt an analysis of the potentials of its development at the overall and sectoral levels under varying assumptions. Based on the results of the analysis, efforts will be focused to formulate a consolidated substantive frame of reference outlining development prospects, strategy guidelines and policy options for action at various levels.

4. A number of United Nations organizations, as well as regional Arab and non-Arab organizations, were consulted with the view to co-ordinating efforts and, where possible, soliciting their association with UNCTAD in the preparation of the study. Some organizations have agreed to provide substantive inputs to the study while others (i.e. the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, the Arab Organization for Industrial Development and Mining, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund for International Development) have also offered financial contributions. In addition, the United Nations General Assembly, under resolution 44/174 of 19 December 1989, has made supplementary resources available for the preparation of the study. With the resource requirements of the study having been met, the UNCTAD secretariat has completed substantive arrangements for commencing with the preparation of the study. The preparation would also entail, inter alia, calling on external expertise as appropriate. The overall intersectoral study is expected to be completed by the end of 1991.

5. The UNCTAD secretariat collaborated with the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre by formulating a project proposal for the preparation of a feasibility study for the establishment of a marketing centre in the occupied Palestinian territory, as called for in UNCTAD resolution 169 (VII). Accordingly, a team of five experts, four from the International Trade Centre and one from the UNCTAD secretariat, was commissioned to visit the occupied Palestinian territory to conduct the study. UNDP financed the mission under its Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian people. The investigation of the mission confirms the urgent need for an indigenous marketing facility in the occupied Palestinian territory to promote and market the exports of Palestinian agricultural products. It has established both the economic and financial feasibility of such a facility. The report of the team of experts, including the feasibility study, has been completed and submitted to UNDP for its consideration and subsequent action leading to the establishment of the marketing centre in the occupied Palestinian territory.

6. UNCTAD secretariat's proposal for establishing an investment projects evaluation centre in the occupied Palestinian territory has received increasing support. The proposal is aimed at initiating and developing Palestinian capabilities in resource allocation and management at both the entrepreneurial and institutional levels. The project proposal has been issued 4/ for circulation restricted to Governments and international organizations with the view to soliciting contributions towards its implementation.

7. The secretariat also intensified effort on the development of a data base on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory. As part of the preparatory work for the intersectoral study, work initiated entailed structuring the statistical

base of the Unit in line with the Economic Time Series in use at the UNCTAD secretariat.

8. In line with the requirements of work programme implementation, including consultations and field investigation, the UNCTAD secretariat fielded missions to Cairo, Amman and Tunis. With respect to access by UNCTAD staff to the occupied Palestinian territory, the Israeli authorities have shown some flexibility but still place restrictions on the designation of staff members for such access. These restrictions were applied in the case of the above-mentioned ITC/UNCTAD mission.

6. United Nations Development Programme

1. Assistance to the Palestinian people was discussed by the UNDP Governing Council at its thirty-seventh session, held from 28 May to 23 June 1990, as a separate item. The Governing Council took note of the report of the Administrator on the UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people summarizing activities undertaken in 1989. 5/

2. UNDP is continually increasing its assistance to the Palestinian people in consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Of the three projects mentioned in General Assembly resolution 39/223, the citrus processing plant (Gaza) is now ready for UNDP implementation, following approval by Israel and agreement by Italy to provide financing for the first phase. Approval for the feasibility study for the construction of a commercial port has been obtained and arrangements are being made to undertake this feasibility study subject to availability of funds. The third project, cement factory, has not yet been approved by the Israeli authorities.

7. United Nations Population Fund

UNFPA has contributed support to the following activities which are of assistance to the Palestinian people.

1. Fellowships: UNFPA has allocated a total amount of $270,790 over five years (1986-1990) to cover fellowships for post-graduate studies. To date, two fellowships in geography at Durham University in England, one fellowship in data collection at the University of Sussex, Institute of Development Studies and one fellowship in population have been undertaken. Two fellowships for a Ph.D. in demography, one at the University of Glasgow, one at the Cairo Demographic Centre, started in 1990 and will run for three years. This project aiming at upgrading the educational level of faculty staff for teaching at the universities is executed by the Office for Project Services.

2. Maternal child health: UNFPA has received a request from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for the funding of two project proposals on expanded maternal health programme in the West Bank and Gaza in the respective amounts of $968,000 and $956,000 over three years.

These projects aim at the improvement of child and maternal health in the units operated by UNRWA in the occupied territory. These proposals are currently under appraisal at headquarters. UNFPA plans to field one officer from the Technical Division to assess the situation and provide input for the finalization of the project documents.

3. Technical assistance: UNFPA has provided support through the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for regional advisory services and training in demographic data collection and analysis. The regional adviser undertook a mission to Syria in August and September 1989 to advise the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on the processing of labour force data and their analytical studies. A second mission was fielded in November to assist the Bureau in evaluating the results of the Lebanon Camps Survey and to draft descriptive analysis. A seminar on the results of the Household Income and Expenditure Survey was scheduled to take place in Damascas in February 1990.

8. United Nations Children's Fund

Introduction

1. UNICEF has been assisting programmes for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza since 1980. Assistance is provided in close co-operation and co-ordination with UNRWA and other relevant United Nations entities in the fields of health, primary and preschool education, activities for women and water and sanitation. Major emphasis has been placed on the reduction of infant mortality rates through improvements in primary health care and through the health education of mothers and primary school children. Special attention has been given to the protection of children against the six vaccine-preventable diseases, as well as to oral rehydration therapy, the control of acute respiratory infections, and safe delivery practices for mothers.

Palestinians in Jordan

2. The primary focus of UNICEF co-operation during the 1980s was on activities related to infant mortality reduction and child survival. UNICEF, working in close co-operation with UNRWA, helped contribute to considerable progress in this field during the decade. In 1980, for instance, immunization coverage levels for DPT3, OPV3 and measles were only about 30 per cent. Just 10 years later, however, coverage for DPT3 and OPV3 is at 99 per cent, while coverage for measles is at 90 per cent. Deaths arising from diarrhoeal dehydration have been reduced from more than 3,000 annually in the early 1980s to just 100 per year at present. The infant mortality rate among Palestinians has fallen from 85 to 35 per 1,000 live births. UNICEF provided vaccines, oral rehydration salts, syringes and needles, as well as cold chain equipment. UNICEF also sponsored numerous national social mobilization campaigns and helped train medical and paramedical staff. Other activities include an income-generation programme for women and the provision of basic health education for mothers.

3. In the coming years, efforts will be made to sustain the high coverage rates of immunization and oral rehydration therapy, as well as to expand child survival activities and include the control of acute respiratory infections. An increased emphasis will be placed on promoting safe motherhood and preventing or reducing disabilities among children. New initiatives will include an early childhood development programme, involving kindergarten teachers and parents in effective early educational stimulation to young children. Another is the Action-Oriented School Health Project, in which teachers will be trained to pass on vital health information to school children.

Occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza

4. The most notable of the many UNICEF activities in the occupied territory has been the joint UNICEF/UNRWA physiotherapy programme set up to provide emergency medical treatment to children suffering from limb fractures sustained during the current situation. Since its inception in the spring of 1988, the programme has reached over 3,600 children. Other UNICEF activities during the 1980s were primarily in the field of child survival. UNICEF and UNRWA efforts have helped to achieve and sustain universal childhood immunization and the use of oral rehydration salts.

5. Like the programme in Jordan, child survival activities including immunization, oral rehydration therapy, and the control of acute respiratory infections, will be the major thrust of future UNICEF co-operation. Efforts will also be made to continue to effectively meet the critical need for physiotherapy services. New areas of co-operation will include early childhood development, women's education, and health education for school children.

Palestinians in Syria

6. UNICEF support for Palestinian refugees in Syria has concentrated on three principal programme fields: child survival, water supply and sanitation, and early childhood development. As in the case of Jordan and the occupied territories, UNICEF, in close collaboration with UNRWA has contributed to progress in the field of child survival. The infant mortality rate has declined from 41 per 1,000 live births in 1984 to 32 per 1,000 live births in 1989. Universal childhood immunization was attained several years ahead of the 1990 target date and has been successfully sustained. Through effective community education campaigns, the vast majority of the Palestinian mothers are now aware of the dangers of diarrhoeal dehydration and how it may be prevented with oral rehydration therapy.

7. UNICEF efforts in water and sanitation include a project to provide 7,000 people in the Qabr Essit camp, near Damascus with clean water and a sewerage network. UNICEF also provided pumps to increase water supplies for 6,000 people in eight camps. In support of early childhood development, UNICEF in close co-operation with GOPAR, the Syrian government agency responsible for Palestinians, has provided educational materials, basic equipment, furniture, and teacher training to kindergartens in the refugee camps.

8. Future co-operation will focus on sustaining past progress in child survival, with more emphasis on the control of acute respiratory infections. Early childhood development will be expanded to include both pre-school-aged children and those children not yet old enough for preschool. Women's development activities will involve literacy classes, vocational training, and community-level income-generating activities.

Palestinians in Lebanon

9. The UNICEF-sponsored Education for Peace programme has been an important effort in a country where after 15 years of civil war, violence and destruction have become a way of life. Camps were organized for the first time in the summer of 1989 and again in 1990, to bring together over 2,000 Palestinian children with Lebanese children from other backgrounds and areas to experience together the beauty of peaceful living, and to appreciate and learn from each others' differences. Another focus of UNICEF activities has been the rebuilding of war-damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in the Beirut-area Palestinian refugee camps. In the Saida and Tyre camps the water supply system was repaired, while in the Borj Al-Barajneh and Chatilla camps nine water tanks were installed and a potable water distribution system was set up. UNICEF, in close co-operation with UNRWA, is also continuing to provide vaccines required for Palestinian children. Finally, UNICEF has provided assistance to Palestinian mothers in support of literacy programmes and income-generating activities.

9. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

1. UNRWA provides assistance to Palestine refugees in the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. A full account of the Agency's activities can be found in the Commissioner-General's report to the General Assembly. 6/ In brief, the UNRWA education programme provides nine grades of general education, vocational and technical training, pre-service and in-service teacher training, and scholarships for higher education. The programme operates with technical assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). More than 135,000 children attend UNRWA schools in the occupied Palestine territory. Ninety of the Agency's 98 schools in the West Bank spent much of the first year and a half of the intifadah closed by order of the Israeli authorities. When they were finally allowed to re-open in July and August 1989, an attempt to complete the 1988-1989 academic year was hampered by curfews, strikes and individual military closure orders until 13 November when they were again ordered closed until 10 January 1990. This brought the school year to an end with the prescribed curriculum uncompleted. Following re-opening in January, the schools operated subject once more to strikes, curfews and individual closure orders but managed to complete academic year 1989-1990 on 2 July with a reduccion of 33 per cent from the duration of the normal school year. The 145 schools in Gaza have remained open throughout the intifadah but have also been seriously affected by the difficult prevailing circumstance in the Gaza Strip.

2. The UNRWA health programme comprises curative and preventive care services, environmental health services in camps and a supplementary feeding service. The programme operates with technical assistance from WHO. The continuation of the intifadah and countermeasures employed by the Israel security forces have had their effect upon UNRWA health services in the occupied territory. The Agency has had to give priority to emergency and casualty care provided in the camps (described in paragraph 4, below), while at the same time maintaining its regular health activities in all areas, in spite of interruptions caused by curfews, strikes and disturbances. Noteworthy recent developments in the West Bank include the renovation and upgrading of health centres at Arrub, Kalandia and Jenin. In the Gaza Strip, noteworthy developments include the inauguration of a newly constructed health centre in Gaza Town in November 1989. In addition, the Agency is proceeding with plans to construct a 200 bed general hospital in Gaza.

3. UNRWA's relief programme provides material assistance including food, blankets, clothing and small cash grants, to those refugees who are chronically unable to provide for themselves ("special hardship cases"). The Relief and Social Services Department is also responsible for welfare case work, women's activities, adult training courses, education and training of the disabled, promotion of income-generating projects, assistance to refugees in emergency situations and the provision of facilities for pre-school activities.

4. In response to the additional needs created by the intifadah and the Israel countermeasures, UNRWA introduced a programme of emergency mesaures which, beginning in early 1988, have been extended through 1989 and 1990. The large number of casualties resulting from the intifadah has led to a considerable expansion of the medical programme. Five clinics in Gaza now remain open 24 hours a day and the remainder open in two shifts, while 16 clinics run double shifts in the West Bank. Additional medical supplies and equipment, including health buses for the evacuation of casualties, have been purchased and the payment of hospital costs and subsidies has been increased. In addition, medical specialists (including orthopaedic surgeons) have been provided and a physiotherapy programme is being run in conjunction with UNICEF in five clinics in Gaza and two in the West Bank.

5. Welfare services have been expanded to assist the families of those killed, disabled or detained and to cope with the far-reaching economic effects of the intifadah. Additional food is being provided to needy people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and needy families have received cash grants. Other emergency measures taken include the expansion of the UNRWA supplementary feeding programme to thousands of additional beneficiaries. A final element of the Agency's emergency measures in the occupied territory is the programme of general assistance and protection. The major component of this programme is the placing of 13 international staff members in the West Bank and 10 in the Gaza Strip as refugee affairs officers. These staff members have facilitated Agency operations in the difficult prevailing circumstances and have assisted the refugee population in their day-to-day life. The refugee affairs officers have helped, by their presence, to lower tensions, especially during confrontations with the security forces, and to prevent maltreatment of the refugees, especially vulnerable groups, such as women and children.

6. In 1988, UNRWA launched an expanded programme of assistance comprised of projects to improve living conditions in the occupied territory. A target working figure of $65 million was set for a period of three years, of which $30 million had been received or pledged by July 1990. A high priority in the expanded programme of assistance is to ensure the refugees living in the 27 camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have decent shelter and a sanitary environment. Accordingly, substantial efforts are being made in repairing and reconstructing refugee shelters and in upgrading the quality of rehabilitation.

10. World Food Programme

1. While in the past WFP has provided emergency food assistance through host Governments to the Palestinian people, in recent years the Programme has not been able to provide such assistance since no request was received either from host Governments or from PLO. According to WFP regulations, requests for emergency and/or development assistance from a liberation movement, to be implemented with the agreement of the host countries, may be considered.

2. During the meeting of the WFP governing body in June 1990 the Palestinian delegation approached the secretariat with an oral request for possible food assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territory. WFP is giving this request due consideration and, in close co-operation with other United Nations agencies which are already assisting the Palestinian people in the occupied territory, it may be possible to provide food assistance for economic and social development.

B. Specialized agencies

1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

At its twenty-fifth session in November 1989, the FAO Conference adopted resolution 1/89 entitled "Provision of technical assistance to the Palestinian people", in which the Director-General was requested, inter alia, to send a study mission to the occupied Palestinian territory, and to organize a symposium on the Palestinian agricultural sector. In accordance with the provisions of operative paragraph 6 of that resolution, the Director-General will report to the FAO Council in November 1990, and subsequently to the FAO Conference in November 1991, on the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolution.

2. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

With regard to the matters raised in General Assembly resolution 44/235, GATT wishes to draw attention to the following provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade:

(a) Article V of GATT, concerning freedom of transit, is aimed at ensuring that goods-in-transit through the territories of contracting parties are not

subject to delays and restrictions and are exempt from customs duties and other charges, except charges commensurate with administrative expenses or with the cost of services rendered. It should be noted, however, that these obligations apply only in respect of traffic in transit to or from contracting parties. Any contracting party is, however, free to extend such benefits to countries other than contracting parties;

(b) In respect of preferential treatment of exports, GATT wishes to point out that the decision of 28 November 1979 of the Contracting Parties on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries (the so-called Enabling Clause) foresees that developed contracting parties to GATT may accord preferential tariff treatment - and in certain circumstances preferential treatment with respect to non-tariff measures - to products originating in developing countries in accordance with the Generalized System of Preferences. The selection of developing countries that would benefit from such preferences is a matter to be decided by each preference-granting Government.

3. International Fund for Agricultural Development

(a) Article 2 of the Agreement establishing IFAD states that "the objectives of the fund shall be to mobilize additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing member States";

(b) Section 1 (b) article 7 of the same agreement lays down, inter alia, that IFAD is to provide financing "only to developing States that are members" of IFAD;

(c) On the eligibility of a State to become a member of IFAD, section 1 (a) of article 3 states that "membership of the Fund shall be open to any State, member of the United Nations or any of its specialized agencies, or of the International Atomic Energy Agency";

(d) IFAD therefore has not provided any financial assistance to the Palestinian people.

4. International Labour Organisation

The activities carried out by ILO for the benefit of the workers of the occupied territory are contained in appendix II to the report of the Director-General to the seventy-seventh session of the International Labour Conference, particularly paragraphs 117 to 124. The report was discussed at a special sitting of the Conference. In the framework of its mandate, ILO maintains continuous contact and co-operation with various Arab authorities and Palestinian representatives in order to ensure objective and realistic reporting on the situation. As mentioned in paragraph 2 of the above-mentioned report, the ILO mission to Arab States met with, inter alia, representatives of PLO. These consultations also serve the purpose of helping to define future activities to be undertaken by ILO.

5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. The Director-General, following the preparation of a comprehensive study of the needs of the Palestinian people within UNESCO's field of competence, was invited by the Executive Board at its 132nd session to provide for the closest possible participation of Palestine in the activities of UNESCO, in particular through its various programmes. Arrangements have subsequently been made to facilitate this co-operation: the Permanent Observer of Palestine is now entitled to make direct requests under UNESCO's Participation Programme; and an intersectoral co-ordination mechanism has been instituted within the secretariat to strengthen progressively UNESCO assistance to the Palestinian people.

2. In conformity with the Executive Board's decisions, 10 projects, representing a total cost of $US 22,365,000, have been identified to respond to the needs of Palestinian people in the field of education and training. At its 134th session, the Executive Board invited the Director-General to pursue his action by circulating widely the study of the needs of the Palestinian people in the fields of competence of UNESCO to multilateral and bilateral funding sources and by preparing, in consultation with the Permanent Observer of Palestine, the necessary project documents to be submitted to the various funding sources.

6. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Since the third session of its General Conference, held in November 1989, UNIDO has focused on the following activities for technical assistance to the Palestinian people:

1. Assistance for the establishment of a vegetable grading and packing house

In response to the request of UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian people, UNIDO has fielded a mission to the occupied territory to examine the possibility of establishment of a vegetable grading and packing house to be used mainly for exports from the Gaza Strip to countries of the European Economic Community. As a result, a technical report was prepared and submitted to UNDP in December 1989 containing advice on the feasibility of a vegetable grading and packing facility for direct exports from the Gaza Strip.

2. Assistance to the plastics industry

A respective project document, which was prepared by UNIDO, is still under consideration by UNDP. The objective of the assistance is to establish a plastics testing laboratory in the occupied territories.

3. Training course in pharmaceutical and chemical industries

Negotiations are under way with the Turin Centre of ILO to undertake a training course. It has been agreed that details of implementation have to be worked out in the near future. UNDP is expected to finance this activity.

4. A UNIDO Seminar on obstacles of and prospects for the Palestinian industrial sector, held at Vienna in October 1989, formulated recommendations for further assistance. The final report was distributed in March 1990. At the same time, discussions were held with representatives of Palestine, the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the UNDP office in Jerusalem on ways and mechanisms of implementation of those recommendations.

5. Close co-operation and co-ordination with other United Nations agencies and organizations have been pursued, particularly with regard to the issuance of the bulletin "West Bank and Gaza Update", which is covering the needs of these organizations' activities in support of the Palestinian people. Meanwhile, UNIDO took part in the last inter-agency meeting, held at Geneva in May 1990, which dealt with ways and means of responding to the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. In that meeting, the free access of the United Nations agencies including, UNIDO, to the occupied territory was further discussed, and it was recommended that more efforts should be made to meet that objective. UNDP and UNRWA umbrellas were emphasized to be possible channels for delivering technical assistance to the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Notes

1/ E/CN.6/1990/10.

2/ E/1990/71.

3/ TD/B/1266.

4/ UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/Misc.1.

5/ DP/1990/84.

6/ For the report for the period 1 July 1988 to 30 June 1989, see Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13); for the report for the period 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990, presented to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, see ibid., Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/45/13).